Volume III.
Number 17.

Week of
July 6, 1942

Critics' THEATRE REVIEWS

1942

INDEX

Stage Play	Pages
All in Favor	380, 381, 382
All the Comforts of Home	280, 281, 282
Autumn Hill	314, 315, 316
*Broken Journey	265, 266, 267
*By Jupiter	274, 275, 276
Cafe Crown	370, 371, 372, 373
Candida	301, 302, 303
Cat Screams (The)	270, 271, 272
Comes the Revelation	278, 279, 280
First Crocus (The)	297, 298, 299
Flowers of Virtue (The)	354, 355, 356
Guest in the House	336, 337, 338
Harlem Cavalcade	296, 297, 298
Heart of a City	346, 347, 348
Hedda Gabler	358, 359, 360, 361
Jason	377, 378, 379, 380
Johnny on a Spot	391, 392, 393
Johnny 2X4	326, 327, 328
Keep 'Em Laughing	306, 307, 308
Kiss for Cinderella (A)	332, 333, 334
Lady Comes Across	388, 389, 390
*Laugh, Town, Laugh!	268, 269, 270
Life of Reilly (The)	298, 299, 300
Lily of the Valley	365, 366, 367, 368
Moon Is Down (The)	318, 319, 320
Nathan the Wise	331, 332, 333
Papa Is All	394, 395, 396
Pian M	342, 343, 344
*Porgy and Bess	373, 374, 375, 376
*Priorities of 1942	329, 330, 331
Rivals (The)	384, 385, 386, 387
Solitaire	362, 363, 364, 365
*Star and Garter	262, 263, 264
The Strings, My Lord, Are False	287, 288, 289
They Should Have Stood in Bed	349, 350, 351
†*This Is the Army	256, 257, 258, 259
Top-Notchers (Keep 'Em Laughing)	306, 307, 308
*Uncle Harry	284, 285, 286
Under This Roof	339, 340, 341
Walking Gentleman (The)	292, 293, 294
What Big Ears	309, 310
Yesterday's Magic	312, 313, 314

PRODUCTIONS CONTINUING

Reviews appeared in the 1941 CRITICS' THEATRE REVIEWS

Stage Play	1941 Vol. Pages
*Angel Street	182, 183, 184, 185
*Arsenic and Old Lace	417, 418, 419, 420
*Blithe Spirit	237, 238, 239, 240
*Claudia	378, 379, 380, 381
*Junior Miss	211, 212, 213, 214
*Let's Face It	249, 250, 251, 252
*Life With Father	489, 490, 491
*My Sister Eileen	445, 446, 447
*Sons o' Fun	193, 194, 195, 196

Asterisks indicate shows scheduled to play during the week of July 6, 1942.
†"This Is the Army" opened Saturday, July 4th, at the Broadway Theatre.

THEATRE REVIEWS IS A COMPLETE GUIDE AND RECORD TO THE NEW YORK SHOWS

Critics' Theatre Reviews brings you each week the complete reviews as they originally appeared in these New York papers

NEW YORK SUN
NEW YORK POST
NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE
NEW YORK NEWSPAPER "PM"
NEW YORK TIMES
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS
NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM
NEW YORK JOURNAL-AMERICAN

Place this week's reviews with preceding weekly reviews so as to have always an up to date file of the New York Stage.

Published by

CRITICS' THEATRE REVIEWS, 235 East 22nd Street, New York, N. Y.

Yearly Subscription
$15.00

"This Is the Army"

NEW YORK NEWSPAPER "PM"
July 6, 1942

The U. S. Army Captures Broadway

By LOUIS KRONENBERGER

A HORDE of people who not so long ago wouldn't have been caught dead in New York on the Fourth of July streamed into the Broadway Theater Saturday night, paying anywhere up to $27.50 for the privilege. They showed remarkably good sense. It was a special occasion, and it wound up an exciting one. Uncle Sam had turned producer, packing the stage with his soldiers for the benefit of Army Relief. And, everything considered, he put on a whale of a show.

The genius of the affair was Irving Berlin, who repeated the job he had done with *Yip, Yip, Yaphank* during World War I. *Yip, Yip, Yaphank* has acquired the glamour of distance, but *This Is the Army* has what is every whit as good, the vitality of the moment. It's a good marching show without being too military a one. It's a professional show without being too Broadway a one. It speaks for the Army with a touch of pride that breaks through its lightheartedness, but it doesn't wrap itself up in the flag or assume that, where entertainment is concerned, bugles have the edge on saxophones.

Some of the humor in *This Is The Army* is perhaps a little frail; a voice, here and there, can't really do justice to a song; and at moments the show has a certain kinship with the heartier type of college theatricals. But in general the underpinning is remarkably sturdy. The huge cast, a good part of which has had no Broadway experience, is very well trained. What it lacks in talent it more than makes up for in teamwork. And on that solid base, the show wheels and revolves in a youthful and individual style of its own. It has spring and verve and genuine gaiety. The people in it manage to shoot the works without rough-housing or falling all over the place. *This Is The Army* is a lesson in how much can be achieved not only without stars, or even without girls, but largely without actors.

The first act goes along casually for a while, offering a minstrel and then a vaudeville show to let the cast sing and juggle and tumble and crack jokes. Then *This Is The Army* catches the wind and fills its sails: there is a brilliantly costumed Russian number full of fast dancing, a Harlem number full of more fast dancing, and a lusty finale that turns the Navy loose on Army soil. The second act bounces to life with a sketch about the Stage Door Canteen, so good natured that it doesn't have to be brilliant, and studded with take-offs of Jane Cowl and Joe Cook, the Lunts and Zorina, Noel Coward and Gypsy Rose Lee. There is a fairly rousing tribute to the Air Corps called *Head in the Clouds*; and a fast, gay extravaganza called *A Soldier's Dream*, which is probably the best thing in the show.

They instantly top it off, however — by bringing back the best think in *Yip, Yip, Yaphank*. Indeed, the whole evening veers toward the nostalgic and climactic moment when Irving Berlin and a bunch of oldsters, in their doughboy uniforms, break into *Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning*.

Nothing that Mr. Berlin has written this time is apt to catch on as fast or wear as well, but his tunes are all serviceable and some of the choruses ring out resoundingly. For all he has done, in composing and organizing alike, he deserves enormous credit. But everybody deserves credit: the entire cast; Sergeant Ezra Stone for his brisk direction; Private Robert Sidney and Corporal Nelson Barclift for their vigorous dance routines; Private John Koenig for his attractive sets; and the band which, under Corporal Milton Rosenstock, plays everything with zip—including *The Star Spangled Banner*.

NEW YORK POST
July 6, 1942

Irving Berlin's "This Is the Army," a New Musical Hit on Broadway

By WILELLA WALDORF

TWENTY-FOUR years ago Irving Berlin, then a soldier at Camp Upton, turned out an Army show called "Yip Yip, Yaphank" that people still talk about.

Last Saturday evening—the Fourth of July—a sequel was unveiled at the Broadway Theatre entitled "This Is the Army."

Mr. Berlin has composed some haunting tunes for it, and over 300 soldiers recruited from camps all over the country appear in it. It has melody and merriment, warm sentiment and a wonderful spirit. Altogether a delirious and unforgettable evening in the theatre.

The keynote of "This Is the Army" is comedy. It starts off hilariously with a Military Minstrel Show and never loses its sense of humor. Now and then a reminiscent number from "Yip, Yip, Yaphank" is revived for old times' sake, and some good rousing martial music rolls up from the orchestra pit, but "This Is the Army" is seldom serious. It moves with speed and snap, and it could undoubtedly settle down on Broadway for a year or two were it not for the fact that its actors are all privates, corporals or sergeants who must go back to their various regiments before so very long.

"This Is the Army" will remain at the Broadway only for a limited engagement, all receipts going to Army Emergency Relief.

Stage Door Canteen, Jane Cowl and All

Probably the outstanding song hit Mr. Berlin has composed for "This Is the Army" is "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen," sung by Corporal Earl Oxford. The Canteen is used as the background for a series of impersonations of Broadway's celebrities, some of them startlingly effective.

Private Alan Manson's portrait of Jane Cowl acting as a stern House Mother while the Army boys flirt with the hostesses catches some of Miss Cowl's most fetching poses, while Private Tileston Perry presents Lynn Fontanne in one of her most Valentina moods, and James MacColl sounds so much like Alfred Lunt that it is almost possible to believe Mr. Lunt himself may have come out of the kitchen long enough to appear.

Just what Vera Zorina would think of Corporal Nelson Barclift's impression of her toe dancing is a question that fortunately will probably never be answered, since the ballerina is on the Pacific Coast. Private Julie Oshins has apparently studied Gypsy Rose Lee's strip-tease technique carefully. He is charmingly literary about it.

Some Sons of Famous Fathers

"This is the Army" is so full of good things that it is impossible to mention all the highlights. But we found Staff Sergeant Ezra Stone generally funny as Staff Sergeant Ezra Stone, and Private Oshins refreshing as Private Oshins. It was pleasant seeing Corporal Philip Truex, son of Ernest Truex, and Private Joe Cook, Jr., looking quite a lot like his dad and even doing some of his stunts. Mr. MacColl's Cowardish number presenting all the comforts for the aristocratic soldier struck us as particularly neat fooling.

"This Is the Army" astounds you suddenly by staging a Military Vaudeville Show with Private Larry Weeks lightening K. P. duty by juggling potatoes, egg beaters, etc. Sergeant John Mendes turns out to be a master magician, and the Alion Trio, strong men, assisted by Private Belmonte Cristiani of the famous circus family, and others, do some impressive acrobatic work.

A squad of talented Negro soldiers provides a riotous few minutes. There is a tribute to the Air Force with thrilling scenic effects by Private John Koenig, and the finale of the first act is over-run suddenly by the Navy.

Much of the comedy involving hairy-chested soldiers dressed up as chorus girls is of the familiar Varsity-show type, but "This Is the Army" has a snappy professional quality that the college boys seldom manage to achieve. After all, most of its leading players were Equity actors only a few short months ago.

"Yip Yip Yaphank" Days Recalled

"Mandy," "Ladies of the Chorus" and the unforgettable "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning" are revived from "Yip Yip Yaphank" to considerable effect, notably the last, with Mr. Berlin himself, Dan Healy and some of their 1918 pals back in their old uniforms dancing and singing like rookies again. Mr. Berlin naturally received a huge ovation, every bit of which he deserved.

Army Emergency Relief should reap a harvest from this show, which is sure to be a Broadway hit as long as the Army decides to let it run. It was said at the premiere that Warner Brothers have already made a down payment of $250,000 for the screen rights.

NEW YORK SUN
July 6, 1942

'This Is the Army' New Soldier Show, Arrives at The Broadway Theater

UNCLE SAM celebrated the Fourth of July week end in Manhattan by turning theatrical producer with a soldier show, and as a result Broadway has a rousing new hit. "This Is the Army" it's called and it sets a very lofty mark for future soldier shows to shoot at.

For the production which moved into the Broadway Theater on Saturday night to start a limited engagement for the benefit of the Army Emergency Relief Fund is topnotch entertainment and one of which the whole army can be proud. It has everything that a revue should have, speed and color and laughter and a fine sheaf of tunes and, above all, class. And "This Is the Army" has about it, too, freshness and the spontaneity of youngsters having a rollicking good time.

Put together under the guidance of Irving Berlin as the 1942 version of the hit of the first world war, "Yip, Yip, Yaphank," the new show starts off along minstrel lines, swings into vaudeville before the first act has run its course, and winds up as a revue. Just before the close Mr. Berlin appears with a group of veterans from his 1918 show to sing his popular tune of the earlier war, "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning," and the "Yip, Yip, Yaphank" alumni span the years in fine style with some nimble steps from their own show.

The rest of "This Is the Army" belongs to the soldiers of 1942, however, and they prove most conclusively that some talented theatrical performers are about to march off to fight. Everything gets off to a jubilant start with most of the company of 300 seated on the stage in uniform, tier on tier back from the footlights, and Mr. Berlin has given them a stirring song to sing just after the curtain rises. It bears the same title as the show itself and you're certain to hear it aplenty from now on, for it has a true martial swing.

During the minstrel show part of the program, Sergt. Ezra Stone, who did an able job in directing the production, makes an appearance to sing a song "The Army's Made a Man of Me" in his best Henry Aldrich manner. In this he is abetted by Corporal Philip Truex, son of Ernest Truex and Private Julie Oshins, a young man with a natural flair for comedy. In this section too are introduced also two of the most tuneful numbers in the delightful score Mr. Berlin has contributed to the show: "I'm Getting Tired" and "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen." Private William Horne sings the first song and Corporal Earl Oxford the second, and some musical comedy producer should look these lads up when the war is over.

The vaudeville part of the show is excellent. Private Larry Weeks even manages to make kitchen police seem a pleasure with his juggling, and Sergt. John Mendes's tricks of

(Continued on page 258)

"This Is the Army"

NEW YORK JOURNAL-AMERICAN
July 6, 1942

'This Is the Army' Opens at Broadway

Irving Berlin's Show with Soldier Cast Has Speed, Precision and Smartness

By JOHN ANDERSON

THOUGH the Under Secretary of War, Robert P. Patterson, admits that he is no drama critic, he can tell a smash hit as well as the next man and he stated not an opinion but a fact when he described "This Is the Army," at the Broadway Theatre as "a rip-roaring success." The Honorable Secretary ventured the statement before the show opened Saturday night, but it was quickly confirmed by an audience that had paid $45,000 to get in. I saw even drama critics clapping their hands, thereby proving Sherman right again.

This is, as everybody in the world including La Shickelgruber must know by now, the show Irving Berlin got together for the Army Emergency Relief Fund, as a sort of Broadway successor to "Yip, Yip, Yaphank" which he did in World War I. When he offered to do another show, the Army accepted and put at his disposal various stage professionals who had joined the army, including actors, scene designers, and so on.

The Broadway engagement is to be limited to four weeks, and news leaked out Saturday night that Warner Brothers had made a down payment of $250,000 for the movie rights, plus a percentage of profits. Since this sum goes to the Emergency Relief Fund the show had raised nearly $300,000 before it raised its curtain, which is nice going.

After seeing it I suspect that it could raise anything including, if necessary, the roof. Mr. Berlin has contributed an ingenious and amusing score. Private John Koenig has designed some simple and effective settings, and under the direction of Sergeant Ezra Stone the show moves with the speed and precision and smartness that are expected of the professional stage, to say nothing of the Army.

It starts out with a military minstrel show, with an amusing touch of Army formality when the interlocutor orders the singers to get up and render "with appropriate feeling" the various songs, including a fine number called "This Is the Army," and the sentimental "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen," sung by Corp. Earl Oxford and company.

With the arrival of Sergt. Stone, Corp. Philip Truex (son of Ernest) and Pvt. Julie Oshins the show starts laughing. After the war this Pvt. Oshins should certainly become Public Oshins, for he is an impish and delightful comedian, and responsible for much of the fun, including an unexpectedly hilarious burlesque of Gypsy Rose Lee. Sgt. Stone adds considerably to the merriment by a song "The Army's Made a Man Out of Me," and the minstrel section winds up with "Mandy" which, if I am not mistaken, was part of "Yip, Yip, Yaphank."

Military Vaudeville

The next section is a military vaudeville show, with several superlative numbers. Pvt. Larry Weeks gets some juggling humor out of a K. P. sketch, and Sgt. John Mendes performs some convulsing sleight of hand designed to drive officers on inspection crazy. The vaudeville concludes with a wonderful acrobatic and balancing act by the Allon Trio and Sgt. Arthur Steiner.

There is the usual joking number, inevitable in army and varsity shows, about the hairy-chested "chorus girls," and after an amusing item, sung by Pvt. Oshins, called "That Russian Winter," the show hits a spot of terrific speed and zest, called "What the Well Dressed Man in Harlem Will Wear," featuring some amazing specialties by Cpl. James A. Cross, and Pvts. Marlon Brown and William Wyckoff.

Navy Enters Show

The finale of Act 1 is one of the cleverest numbers in the show. An Army quartet appears and begins singing "This Is the Army" and amid a loud clamor outside, some Navy police go up the aisle, on to the stage, shove the Army quartet off, and explain that the Army is all very well, but what could it do without the Navy? Then the Army cast, dressed as gobs, returns and puts on a handsome and spectacular salute to the Navy.

During the shorter and not quite so sprightly second act, the most amusing number was "Stage Door Canteen," which produced some amusing imitations of such well-known stage stars as Jane Cowl, by Pvt. Alan Manson; Lynn Fontanne by Pvt. Tileston Perry, Alfred Lunt by PFC. James MacColl and, of course, Gypsy Rose Lee by the mischievious Oshins.

It was the appearance of Mr. Berlin, in his 1918 uniform, with Yip, Yip, Yaphankers, in "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning," that brought out the really thunderous applause, full of all the sentiment of stage and service, in recognition of a great show done for a great cause. It is a double feature bargain investment in entertainment and war service, worth more than your money's worth.

'THIS IS THE ARMY'

Irving Berlin's new all-soldier show, presented by Uncle Sam at the Broadway Theatre on July 4, 1942, for the benefit of the Army Emergency Relief Fund. The cast of 300 soldiers includes Sgts. Ezra Stone, John Mendes; Corps. Nelson Barclift, Earl Oxford, Philip Truex; Pvts. (1st class) Fred Kelly, James MacColl, Joe Cook, Jr., Louis Salmon; Pvts. Julie Oshins, Alan Manson, Hayden Rorke, William Roerick, Stewart Churchill, Burl Ives, Pinkie Mitchell, Gary Merrill, William Horne, Larry Weeks, Belmonte Cristiani, Anthony Ross, Tileston Perry, Richard Irving. Directed by Sgt. Ezra Stone; scenery and costumes by Pvt. John Koenig; dances by Corp. Nelson Barclift and Pvt. Robert Sidney; military formations by Corp. Chester O'Brien; orchestra directed by Corp. Milton Rosenstock.

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS
July 6, 1942

Hail to "This Is the Army!" Our Greatest Soldier Show

"This Is the Army," a musical revue assembled and expanded by Irving Berlin, author of "Yip Yip Yaphank"; music by Berlin; direction by Ezra Stone. Produced by your Uncle Sam at the Broadway Theatre, New York, July 4, 1942.

★ ★ ★ ★

By BURNS MANTLE

WE'RE not doing things by halves these days. History's greatest war! History's youngest heroes! And now America's greatest soldier show! Quite reasonable that "This Is the Army" should play to the largest single night's receipts within the memory of the oldest Shubert. Forty-five thousand dollars was the take!

When Irving Berlin, the creator of the show, edged his modest self out of a pup tent and between curtains at the Broadway Theatre Saturday night, listened to the uproar for a moment and then quieted it with a simple gesture—when Irving raised his plaintive indoor tenor in "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning," he was nearing the close of a remarkable entertainment and a gallant adventure.

"This Is the Army" was his own idea, revived twenty-five years after he had worked it out as "Yip, Yip, Yaphank" at Camp Upton in 1918. Then it served as a boost for the morale and the emergency fund of the first AEF. Now it carries on in the interest of a second AEF.

Better Show

"This Is the Army" is a better show than its predecessor, just as this is a better army and our people a more determined people than they were a quarter century ago. Development and achievement are never static in a democracy.

Looking back at the reactions this historic Saturday night inspired, I think my greatest thrill came in with a tribute to the Navy at the first act finale. Not that a good citizen plays favorites in the services, but because this number brought with it a sense of completeness, a feeling of united force, and a glowing pride in an Army that can thus graciously honor a Navy that is bearing the brunt of our first attacks. That spirit just can't be beaten, now or ever.

Beyond that item, there are so many features to recall it isn't easy to classify them. Outstanding, naturally, are the massed pictures of the soldiers banked for their minstrel first part, with their hair combed, their eyes shining and their uniforms fresh and new.

And again at the close, when they were banked even more solidly, wearing their new helmets and, with grim faces, singing lustily and defiantly of their determination that "This Time" the job is going to be carried through to a finish that will be final and complete.

Outstanding is the memory of the fine 50-piece orchestra under Corp. Milton Rosenstock. And the "Stage Door Canteen" number, with Alan Manson doing a gorgeous copy of Jane Cowl serving as a mistress of ceremony and introducing Pvt. Tileston as Lynn Fontanne, Pvt. Oshins as Gypsy Rose Lee and half a dozen others.

Of Corp. Oxford's singing of Eileen, the hostess, who stole his heart. Of Staff Sergt. Ezra Stone's wistful "Aw, fellows!" when his soldiers refused to snap to attention.

I can still see the strong man of the Allon trio—maybe it was Sergeant Steiner—or Private Belmonte Cristiani—holding up six men who had piled on his shoulders. And Sergeant Mendes in an amusing and skillful inspection bit. And Private Weeks juggling potatoes.

Colored Unit Scores

There's a bright memory of Sergeant Stone singing "The Army's Made a Man Out of Me." How wonderfully that fits all 300 of these soldier-actors and musicians!

I recall gratefully, the colorful "Mandy" finale to the minstrels. And the colored unit singing "What the Well Dressed Man in Harlem Will Wear," shot with vitamins and good nature. No problem to worry about here.

There is a grand Berlin song for the American Eagles—"Head in the Clouds"—though I wish it might have concerned heroics rather than romance for a change. Private Robert Shanley sang it beautifully. And an amusing burlesque, "A Soldier's Dream"—you know, always about wimmin.

It's a marvelous soldier show. Good for our morale and theirs. Good for recruiting, too. And bond sales. And especially good for the faith that conquers.

It would take another column to apportion the credits. Sergeant Stone has done a masterly job working the various groups into smoothly running unified action. Private Koenig has had a grand time with the costumes. And 300 actors and musicians have co-operated amazingly.

"This Is the Army"

NEW YORK TIMES
July 5, 1942

'This Is the Army' A Rousing Hit; Throng Pays $45,000 at Opening

Soldier Cast Gives Rollicking Performance in Benefit Show—Irving Berlin, Back With Yaphank Tune, Gets Ovation

A PRODUCER billed simply as "Uncle Sam" put on a show last evening at the Broadway Theatre, and as "This Is the Army" went happily on its way it became evident to all concerned that there was the best show of a generation. With Irving Berlin songs out of that former sergeant's special top drawer, and with a cast of three hundred from training camps all over the country, the new soldier revue offered for the benefit of the Army Emergency Relief Fund showed quite clearly that the new manager always can fall back on Broadway if everything else fails. Though it isn't likely to.

Watching the first performance of this sequel to "Yip, Yip, Yaphank" of 1918 were officials from Washington, headed by Under-Secretary of War Patterson; city officials, theatre luminaries, plain citizens and, no doubt hidden away in the gallery, a sprinkling of the melancholy Army sergeants at whom much of "This Is the Army" is aimed.

Among them all, they paid $45,000 for their tickets, which probably is a world's record for an opening night and is a fair start toward yielding the fund the $1,000,000 that through box-office, screen and music sales is regarded as not inconceivable.

Last night's audience got its money's worth, even up to the $10,000 Kate Smith paid for two tickets. It saw a cast that had been brought together by an Army priority from the ends of America; men who in late private life had worked in night clubs or the theatre or radio. It heard them at work on Mr. Berlin's latest and best collection of songs, and toward the end of the evening Mr. Berlin came on himself to sing the "Oh, How I Hate To Get Up in the Morning" which was in "Yip, Yip Yaphank" and whose theme is still regarded as undying among members of the lower military orders.

Merely Temporary Actors

Nor was that all. Up on the stage, three hundred well trained voices were singing that

"This is the Army, Mr. Jones,
No private rooms or telephones."

And other voices were chanting of the Stage Door Canteen, of the Russian Winter, of Teutonic and Japanese "Aryans Under the Skin." As a sort of theme song for both beginning and end of the show—just in case any one might be forgetting—the cast observed that its members were actors only temporarily and soon would be off to other things. And also, to point up the idea a bit more, there were half a dozen or so alumni from "Yip Yip, Yaphank" who came out in their old uniforms—let out a bit in some cases—to do a dance and incidentally show any lurking agent that the Bald and Old Man's group of selectees would do all right too.

The idea of the show was Mr. Berlin's. "Yip, Yip, Yaphank" having been successful in the earlier war, he wondered why a sequel wouldn't do in 1942. The War Department was agreeable, and in the Spring the composer plus the strange and old piano he uses, found themselves as military necessities at Camp Upton. Mr. Berlin turned out words and music, Sergeant Ezra Stone—the Henry Aldrich of the radio—was called in from Governors Island to direct, orders were sent around to officers commanding various possible performers to report to Upton forthwith.

First Rehearsals at Upton

The first rehearsals were held at Camp Upton, and then a month or so ago the whole detachment moved to New York. Rehearsals were held day and night in various empty theatres, and when the actors weren't rehearsing they were drilling in the armory or the park, the War Department being a task master of some consequence. Throwing together a musical comedy for Broadway usually destroys good humor for miles around; the actors of "This is the Army" suffered quite cheerfully the double-jeopardy of two difficult jobs.

Their show opens with a "Military Minstrel Show," with the huge chorus seated on a banked grandstand back of the minstrels, and just to show there is nothing held up his sleeve, Mr. Berlin has tossed into this unit three possible hits. "This Is the Army," as a title song, is rousing; it concerns a group of badgered selectees arriving in camp and finding out about the Army. "I'm Getting Tired So I Can Sleep" is sung by Private William Horne plus an octette; a lament: "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen," is sung by Corporal Earl Oxford.

"My Sergeant and I" is in both the minstrel and Army tradition. It is sung and danced (hob-nailed boots) by Private Pinkie Mitchell, with Private James MacColl and Private Leonard Berchman to tell the jokes about the service and the WAAC's. Sergeant Stone, stepping out of character as director for a moment, sings "The Army's Made a Man Out of Me," the Stone chorus consisting of Corporal Philip Truex—the son of Ernest Truex—and Private Julie Oshins, the latter a former night club performer who runs madly all through the show and who will have no trouble getting work after the war. Ending the minstrel number is "Mandy," also from "Yip, Yip, Yaphank," with blackface and clog and dances directed by Private Fred Kelly.

Wanders Into Vaudeville Show

Because the scenery must be changed, "This Is the Army" then wanders amiably into a vaudeville show, where Private Larry Weeks juggles the potatoes of kitchen police and Sergeant John Mendes, a dead-pan comic of no mean merit, gets in trouble with the officers. Also in the vaudeville is a tumbling and strong-man act, which last night was making the mouths of Broadway producers water, and whose anchor man for the living pyramid will next be in the news when he opens up the fifth, sixth and seventh fronts by himself.

"That Russian Winter" has Private Oshins, a Russian dance, Corporal Nelson Barclift and Privates Robert Sidney and Clarence Jaeger as lovely ladies, and on the whole is quite wonderful; and "What the Well Dressed Man in Harlem Will Wear" is a Negro number which goes on at a terrific speed for ten minutes with practically no foot ever touching the ground. And as a finale of the first act, the Army offers the Navy; the cast simply changing uniforms and coming on en masse to salute a brother service.

In the second act the biggest item is set in the Stage Door Canteen, where Private Alan Manson impersonates Jane Cowl, Corporal Barclift, Zorina, and the great Private Oshins out-gypsys Gypsy Rose Lee. Also making an appearance is Private Joe Cook Jr., the son of Joe Cook. He comes in on a unicycle, of course, juggles, smiles and is unquestionably Jr. Add hostesses, soldiers and some wistful lyrics about what might be better at the canteen and you have "This Is the Army's" graceful thanks for the enlisted man's home away from home.

"Aryans Under the Skin"

"Aryans Under the Skin" is sung by the "Japs and Germans," the Japs being Corporal Truex and Privates Robert Moore—this is Victor Moore's son, very tiny and getting into show business the hard way—Mitchell and Atkins, and the Germans, all frauleins of 200 pounds, plus Privates Richard Reeves, Norman Van Emburgh, Burl Ives and Roger Kinne. To the air force there is a spectacular tribute as "American Eagles" and there is a ballet.

Finally comes "A Soldier's Dream"—and what does he dream of? Girls and breakfast in bed and sleep; and that leads to the Yip, Yip, Yaphankers and Mr. Berlin and his hating to get up in the morning. In the dream the soldiers who are girls are beautiful girls and the Yip, Yip, Yaphankers who are dancers are beautiful dancers. Mr. Berlin, slight and fragile looking, probably didn't have to reset his uniform at all, and it was to Mr. Berlin as the guiding genius of "This Is the Army" that went the greatest sum of applause.

The show is to play every evening, including Sunday, with matinees on Saturday and Sunday. Beyond a few minor expenses, the receipts go to the relief fund. Mr. Berlin already has made over all the rights to the music, which from the sale of records and sheet music will make a formidable figure.

Screen rights have been acquired by Warner Brothers, which paid a first installment of $250,000 to the relief fund against a percentage of the profits, it was announced yesterday by the company. Negotiations were completed yesterday by Major Albert Warner after several days of conferences between Lieut. Col. Jack L. Warner, now of the Army Air Forces, and show officials. The film, like the stage show, will be an all-soldier affair. Mr. Berlin will supervise the adaptation.

"This Is the Army" is here for a limited engagement of four weeks.

NEW YORK SUN

(Continued from page 256)

magic prove as baffling to the audience as to the harassed lieutenant inspecting him. Some acrobatic "maneuvers" by the Allon Trio and Sergt. Arthur Steiner, P. F. C. Leander Berg and Privates Belmonte Cristiani and Pinkie Mitchell wind up this section of the show and first rate acrobatics they are too.

As "This Is the Army" swings into revue pattern, it dips back to "Yip, Yip, Yaphank" for an amusing bit of burlesque called "Ladies of the Chorus" and then moves on via a song about Adolf Hitler and "That Russian Winter" into one of the high lights of the whole show, "What the Well Dressed Man in Harlem Will Wear." You won't see any better stepping anywhere along Broadway than that presented by the Negro dancers to the rhythmic strains of this number. And Private William Wyckoff proves himself a most amazing fellow when provided with a pair of kitchen spoons and a chair.

The army extends a salute to the navy in the spectacular climax of the first act, and it gets around to the air force, too, in the second act, with Private Robert Shanley doing a fine job with Mr. Berlin's catchy "Head in the Clouds" song and the chorus bringing out all the swing and melody in "American Eagles."

In the second act too comes the army's version of what goes on at the Stage Door Canteen. Private Alan Manson impersonates Jane Cowl most skillfully here and P. F. C. Joe Cook Jr. the image of his father, appears as Joe Cook. The comedian's boy can juggle a bit too, and tap dance even better. P. F. C. James MacColl is Alfred Lunt to the life in the canteen, and Private Tileston Perry runs him a close second as Lynn Fontanne. Private Oshins reappears here to make the most of an impersonation of Authoress Gypsy Rose Lee and a hilarious one it is.

The scenery and costumes designed by Private John Koenig are an effective asset to the production and Private Robert Sidney and Corporal Nelson Barclift have directed the dances to bring out the humor in the prancing of these high-stepping chorus "girls." A big army orchestra under the baton of Corporal Milton Rosenstock performs nobly in the pit meanwhile.

If there were no army orders ahead to call a halt shortly, "This Is the Army" would most certainly go marching on for months.

HERRICK BROWN.

NOTICE

The next Broadway theatre opening and, of course, the next issue of CRITICS' THEATRE REVIEWS are scheduled to appear early in September.

"This Is the Army"

NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE
July 6, 1942

Historic Event

By RICHARD WATTS JR.

"THIS Is the Army" is not merely a magnificent soldier show. It is one of the greatest musical shows of any description ever produced in this country. To Irving Berlin, who wrote and produced it; to Ezra Stone, who directed it; to all of the soldiers who are in any way participating in it and to the United States Army which was intelligent enough to realize the value of such a production to the wartime spirit of all of us, there must go more credit than it is possible to set down here. Because "This Is the Army" does not try to capitalize on patriotism, it is one of the most truly patriotic works I have ever encountered. Because it always keeps its sense of humor and never tries to be emotional, it is one of the most moving events in theatrical history.

• • •

In the most humble and unpretentious fashion, it makes one additionally proud of America and Americans. In no spirit of chauvinism, I think I can say that no other country in the world could have produced it. Talk about propaganda! This straightforward musical show, put on by and with enlisted men of the United States Army, which makes not the slightest gesture in the way of propaganda, is the most eloquent imaginable sort of advocate for the much talked about American spirit. Presented in any of the countries of the democratic world, it would make more friends for the United States than any sort of professional good-will mission imaginable. Capturing the best of the amateur and the professional qualities in one effort, "This Is the Army" is at once a delightful entertainment and a song of American democracy.

Perhaps, though, it might be a good idea to get down to a few details of the tremendously exciting show that is now being offered for a limited engagement at the Broadway Theater. It happens, of course, that the enormous gayety and friendliness of spirit, the general brilliance of production and the air of modest gallantry that surround the Army show have a much greater effect than the sum of its people's individual contributions to it. Nevertheless, those individuals do deserve the deepest and most heartfelt tribute. First of all, certainly, comes Mr. Berlin, himself, who is a distinguished American citizen as well as a great showman, and who, in a lifetime, has given us the historic soldier shows of two world wars. The other, you will probably remember, was "Yip, Yip, Yaphank" back in 1918.

• • •

One difficulty in setting down the admirable details of "This Is the Army" lies in the inescapable fact that the show really has everything. That is to say, it has everything except girls, and the terrible truth is that you don't miss them. As a rule, shows in which men appear even momentarily as girls have a way of being embarrassing. This is the heroic exception. Here the impersonations really are fun. As for Mr. Berlin's music, it is winning and charming, with "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen" and the title song proving particularly effective, and "Mandy" and "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning" from "Yip, Yip, Yaphank" sounding just as delightful as ever. The scenery and costumes by Private John Koenig are colorful and imaginative, and the idea of paying tribute to the Navy in the first-act finale was an inspiration.

• • •

Among the actors there are a vast number of individual triumphs only a few of which can be put down here. Naturally the whole group of Negro singers and dancers are triumphant, while the veterans from the show of 1918 are in fine form, too. Ezra Stone, who is now a sergeant, is still an agreeable comedian. Julie Oshins is a most engaging new comic who will be in demand when he finishes his Army career. Joe Cook jr. has the good fortune to look like his great father and to possess a lot of his winning talent. The Allon Trio, three acrobats who enlisted en masse, are superior members of their profession, while juggling and sleight of hand work are splendidly represented by Larry Weeks and John Mendes, respectively. Alan Manson gives a remarkably good impersonation of Jane Cowl. And Mr. Berlin sings, too. "This Is the Army" is a great and historic show.

NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM
July 6, 1942

This Is the Army Takes Broadway

Successor to Yip Yip Yaphank Proves To Be a Triumphant Rout

By GEORGE ROSS

BROADWAY THEATER, July 4 (Delayed).—Stand ready for Good News! The army won a smashing victory on the night of Independence Day, having rolled back the vanquished audience on every flank, and at the same time shattered forever the legend of invincibility of a first-night crowd.

For when the last joke of battle began to clear away and the audience at the Broadway Theater was in full retreat, it was obvious that Uncle Sam's new soldier show, This Is the Army, has turned out the most triumphant rout on this particular front since Yip, Yip, Yaphank in 1918.

Of course, there was no doubt of the outcome from the moment the opening salvo was fired. With their objective clearly in sight—$1,000,000 or more for the Army Emergency Relief Fund—our warriors proved themselves doughboys on the first order to advance. The Warners already had capitulated with $250,000 for the movie rights and the capture of $45,000 booty, including Kate Smith's $10,000 for a pair of premiere tickets, was a fait accompli before the curtain rose.

Uncle Sam has a stunning reason to cite the results proudly to his nephews and nieces and to place a hand affectionately on the shoulder of Irving Berlin who, with Yip, Yip, Yaphank of the last war behind him, conceived This Is the Army. The show, music and lyrics may well be regarded as the best he ever has written.

Well may our Uncle Sammy beam over the manner in which 300 of his khaki-clad kin won the fray. United from camps scattered all about the country, there is nothing about their deportment to indicate that they have been drilled into an attitude of exuberance. Some day the herrenvolk may learn the real meaning of "strength through joy" from these representative soldiers. If this is the army, what is all this melancholy mooching about in civilian life?

• • •

Never Once Hits a Flat Note

From the moment their voices which have been through the whole vocal manual of arms, were raised to sing:

"This is the army, Mr. Jones,
No private rooms or telephones . . ."

they set the key for a resounding, rebounding entertainment that never once hit a flat note—or struck a lull. They sang and danced and quipped with enthusiasm and alacrity. They jested about the top sergeant and the colonel and themselves with the uninhibited glee of a free men's army and they grew sentimental in turn. Somewhere in their fancy-free frolic they made sure to include a grave point of order, to the effect that they now were being witnessed at a joyful avocation; that, first and foremost, they are dedicated to the task primarily at hand—Victory.

With not a little nostalgia, reminiful of those Yip, Yip, Yaphank days, This Is the Army sets about with a rousing military minstrel show its 300 participants arrayed in smart military order on sloping bleachers and by way of informal introduction, the title song, This Is the Army, quickly is succeeded by Pvt. William Horne's melodious complaint, I'm Getting Tired So I Can Sleep.

Then, with mock sentimentality, Pvt. Pinkie Mitchell pays tribute to My Sergeant and I via song and dance and with sentimentality that is far from supercilious, Corp. Earl Oxford next sings the Berlin tune that has been nominated as most memorable, I Lost My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen. To restore any missing memories of Yip, Yip, Yaphank, the minstrel show concludes with Mandy, complete in blackface and with clog dances.

But just before that, Sgt. Ezra Stone, who probably is most illustrious to the 130,000,000 as the Henry Aldrich of radio fame lets us know that The Army's Made a Man Out of Me. His musical accomplices in this report are Corp. Phil Truex, son of the renowned Ernest, and Pvt. Julie Oshins who, in many another moment of the extravaganza, proves himself as probably the most comical man in this man's army, a fact his Broadway friends long suspected when he was making them laugh in civilian life. No one, by the way, needed much proof that the army has made a man of Sergeant Stone. He directed the mammoth entertainment almost single-handed, the "almost" being explained by Pvt. Joshua Logan's last-minute assistance.

• • •

A Merry, Martial Miscellany

From the military minstrel show, This Is the Army proceeds to a merry, martial miscellany. Again Pvt. Julie Oshins is out with a corps of ballet "girls" and barracks—Nijinskys to sing about That Russian Winter which, it is to be suspected, would not amuse der Fuehrer at all and again borrowing a leaf from the pages of Yip, Yip, Yaphank, there are the Ladies of the Chorus to illustrate that gracefulness is not the least of the platoon's attributes.

Even the army has to have a little stalling time to change the scenery and to allow for the prop-switch backstage, a military vaudeville show takes up a few diverting minutes, with Pvt. Larry Weeks indicating how KP can be tolerable for a spud-peeler who knows how to juggle and in which a strong-arm act, flexing almost incredibly powerful muscles, give a fair sample of what our enemies may look forward to on the battlefield.

The first act finale is a gentleman's tribute to the other branch of the armed services, with the army making quick changes into the uniform of the navy and lyricizing a salute to our ocean warriors. But this is preceded by a number itemized What the Well Dressed Man in Harlem Will Wear and in it, practically a division of our Negro soldiers put on a demonstration of what they have not forgotten since they donned khaki for Uncle Sam, dancing with a vigor that would evoke cheers from Bill Robinson. That Wishing Tree in Harlem had better continue standing until they get back.

• • •

At the Stage Door Canteen

If the first act of This Is the Army is enough of an extravaganza for anyone's money, then the second act just about doubles its value, for it is the section which includes a number laid in the Stage Door Canteen with hilarious impersonations of such footlight luminaries as Jane Cowl, Joe Cook, Vera Zorina, Noel Coward, Gypsy Rose Lee, Lynn Fontanne and Alfred Lunt—and piece de resistance of all, the hero of the evening, Irving Berlin, emerging after the alumni of the original Yip, Yip, Yaphank troupe, to sing his everlasting lament, Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning.

If all is fun and frolic in This Is the Army, then warm hearts and upturned faces can afford to wax deadly serious for the closing number. It consists of the chorus singing Mr. Berlin's final refrain. It is a number entitled This Time and its words are fit to be echoed by all Americans. This time, sing our soldiers, we will finish the job, and it will be the last time.

This, then, is the army. There is no doubt that the Army Emergency Relief Fund will prosper because of it. It is dedicated to the worthiest of current causes.

But in any circumstances one thing stands out: This Is the Army is a grand and glorious show.